

Esther 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

Analysis

And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee. Ahasuerus told Haman to keep the money (Haman had offered 10,000 talents, v. 9) and gave him absolute authority over "the people"—still unnamed, showing the king's shocking indifference to their identity. The phrase "to do with them as it seemeth good to thee" granted unlimited discretion, essentially authorizing genocide while absolving himself of direct responsibility. This represents moral evil through delegation—the king enabled mass murder while maintaining plausible deniability. His casual authorization of atrocity without investigation, deliberation, or moral consideration demonstrates profound corruption. Yet God's providence uses even royal moral blindness to set up the dramatic reversal where Haman's plot destroys him instead of the Jews.

Historical Context

The phrase "the silver is given to thee" likely means Ahasuerus declined Haman's monetary offer (v. 9), viewing the action as serving royal interests regardless of payment. Alternatively, it might mean "consider the money yours" (keep it). Either way, the king demonstrated indifference to the financial and moral implications. Ancient monarchs sometimes granted officials *carte blanche* authority over perceived threats, trusting their judgment without verification. This delegation enabled officials like Haman to pursue personal vendettas under cover of state

security. The casual authorization of genocide mirrors other historical instances where leaders enabled atrocities through willful ignorance and moral abdication.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the king's authorization of unspecified evil against unnamed people illustrate moral responsibility through willful ignorance?
2. What does this passage teach about how institutional evil operates through delegation, abstraction, and plausible deniability?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	הַמֶּלֶךְ	לְהָמָן	הַכֶּסֶף	נָתַן	לְךָ	וְהָעָם
said	And the king	unto Haman	The silver	is given	^{H0}	to thee the people
H559	H4428	H2001	H3701	H5414		H5971
לַעֲשׂוֹת	בְּ	טוֹב	בְּעֵינֵיהֶם:			
also to do	^{H0}	good	with them as it seemeth			
H6213		H2896	H5869			

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org